(a) whether Government is aware of the recent incident of collision of chartered planes on the runway of Goa Airport;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government has taken any steps to expand the runways of such airports in the country which are congested and to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in future; and

(d) if so, the details of the airports which are proposed to be expanded, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. On 16.11.2008, there was a ground incident during taxi at Goa airport between two charter flights, VP-BKL, B-747 Operated by Trans Aero Airline and EC-KCP A-330 operated by Thomas Cook.

(b) The incident occurred due to wrong allotment of bay, wrong judgment by crew of aircraft EC-KCP, A-330 and non standard marshalling by Air India Marshaller. Goa airport also has a very constrained apron.

(c) Cause of the subject incident is not attributed to runway length. Expansion of airports is a continuous process taking into account the commercial viability, traffic potential/demands, commitment of airlines to operate through the specific airports. However, to prevent recurrence of such incidents in future, Air India (NACIL) has been advised to give corrective training to all their marshaler/wingwalker, regarding standard marshalling and correct use of signage; Airports Authority of India (AAI) has been advised to counsel the concerned apron controller to design a Standard Operating Procedure between AAI and Naval Air Traffic Control.

(d) Expansion of airports have been completed/initiated at Port Blair in Andaman and Nicobar; Vijaywada and Vishakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh; Dibrugarh, Guwahati and Silchar in Assam; Patna and Gaya in Bihar; Chandigarh; Ranchi in Jharkhand; Goa; Ahmedabad, Vadodara and Surat in Gujarat; Kulu and Gaggal in Himachal Pradesh; Raipur in Chhattisgarh; Belgaum, Hubli and Mangalore in Karnataka; Trivandrum in Kerala; Agatti in Lakshadweep; Khajuraho, Bhopal and Indore in Madhya Pradesh; Aurangabad, Pune, Akola, Gondia in Maharashtra; Imphal in Manipur; Bhubaneshwar in Orissa; Puduchery; Amritsar and Pathankot in Punjab; Jaipur and Udaipur in Rajasthan; Madurai, Coimbatore and Trichy in Tamil Nadu; Agartala in Tripura; Varanasi, Lucknow and Agra in Uttar Pradesh; Dehradun in Uttrakhand; and Cooch Behar in West Bengal.

Upgradation facility for air passengers

†2330. SHRI RAJNITI PRASAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no provision of class upgradation on Air India's direct flight for Delhi-New York-Delhi;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether upgradation facility is not extended despite seats being vacant in upper class and these seats go remaining vacant;

(c) whether upgradation facility will be restored by Government; and

(d) if so, the time when it will be restored?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) These are commercial decisions of the airline, which are taken considering the product and facilities offered by the competitors.

Air services in North India and East India

2331. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the areas in the North India and East India where air services are inadequate or deficient;

(b) the reasons for the same;

(c) the demands made by various quarters in the matter; and

(d) the steps being taken to solve the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) All the operational airports in the North and Eastern India are air linked with the scheduled air services.

(c) and (d) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued Civil Aviation Requirements for scheduled regional air transport service with a view to promote air connectivity within a region, expand air travel services for Tier II and Tier III cities and between specific regions. There are four regions identified as North, South, West, East/North-East coinciding with the Flight Information Regions (FIRs) as defined by the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

The Government has issued initial No Objection Certificate (NOC) to operate Scheduled Air Transport (Regional) Services to M/s. Jagson Airlines and M/s. MDLR Airlines for Northern Region and M/s. Zav Airways for North East/Eastern Region. Out of these M/s. MDLR Airlines commenced its operations in year 2008.

Incidents of bird hits at Delhi airport

2332. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cases of bird hits of civilian aircrafts near the airports particularly at the Delhi Airport have increased in the past few months;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the reasons for increase in bird hits accidents of aircrafts have been ascertained;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and